

Petitions

● (1730)

Mr. Neil Young (Beaches): Mr. Speaker, I present to the Honourable House of Commons in Parliament assembled the petition of the undersigned residents of Canada, who now exercise their right to present a grievance which humbly sheweth that western Canadian farmers paid \$130 million to export grain under the Crow freight rate in the 1981-82 crop year. This grain, in turn, contributed \$6.3 billion to the balance of trade. The undersigned believe this is the farmers' fair contribution to the Canadian economy and that western farmers will pay one times the Crow. The undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon Parliament to maintain the present statutory rate, which of course is the Crow rate. As in duty bound your petitioners ever pray.

[Translation]

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): I wish to present a petition to the Honourable the House of Commons of Canada, in Parliament assembled.

The petition of the undersigned residents of Canada who now exercise their ancient and unchallenged rights to present a grievance, with the assurance that your honourable House will provide a remedy.

Humbly sheweth that:

Whereas western Canadian farmers paid \$131 million to move export grain under the Crow freight rate in the 1981-82 crop year.

That this contributed \$6.3 billion to the balance of trade of Canada.

Whereas the undersigned believe that this is the farmers' fair contribution to the Canadian economy.

And whereas western farmers will pay only one time Crow.

Wherefore the undersigned humbly call upon Parliament to maintain the present statutory grain Crow rate.

And as in duty bound your petitioners will ever pray.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[English]

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Blais) on a point of order.

Mr. Blais: Mr. Speaker, I simply want to draw your attention to Citation 120 of Beauchesne's Fifth Edition on page 39. It says:

Foremost among his many responsibilities, the Speaker has the duty to maintain an orderly conduct of debate by repressing disorder when it arises—

As a result of the last petition presented, Mr. Speaker, I again indicate that in effect the sum total of all the petitions presented today constitute a disorder. I call to your attention Citation 123(5) of Beauchesne's Fifth Edition which says that the Speaker:

—calls to order any Member who is being irrelevant or repetitious in debate.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that there is indeed in this instance a large amount of systematic repetition in order to create

disorder. It is true that you are the servant of this House and you have to maintain decorum, but decorum is not identical to order. There could indeed be very great decorum while there is disorder. In this instance the disorder stems from the fact that the NDP Members, as the Tories did during the constitutional debate with their questions of privilege and the ringing of the bells episode, are interfering with the proper deliberations in this House, the debating process for which this House was constituted, by the systematic abuse of a Standing Order of this House. They are bringing this House into disrepute, as did the ringing of the bells and the questions of privilege put by the Tories during the constitutional debate. There is a limit to what this House can suffer in the way of abuse of its process and Standing Orders.

Mr. Deans: Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I find this attack on you to be unconscionable. I have noted with interest the care you have taken to make sure that each of the petitions was in fact in proper form and that the Member presenting the petition kept within the rules. When any Member strayed outside those rules, you, Sir, very quickly rose and brought him back to order.

I want to say that I resent the Minister of Supply and Services (Mr. Blais) attacking you in this way. I can see no justification for his calling into question the actions of the Speaker in this regard. The Speaker has made it quite clear that what is being done is within the rules of Parliament, and just because the Minister does not like it does not make it wrong!

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair is looking at the clock and it has listened attentively to the argument and will take the matter under consideration. At this stage the Chair will call upon the Hon. Member for Regina East (Mr. de Jong).

Mr. Simon de Jong (Regina East): Mr. Speaker, I also wish to present this petition to you. I have examined it and I believe it to be in proper order and properly signed. This petition addresses itself to the concerns that Canadian citizens have regarding the Crow rate and the cost to western Canadian farmers for the movement of grain. These people are concerned with the effect the proposed resolution will have on their livelihood. They are concerned that this institution will pass legislation which will destroy many farmers. In their petition they state that western Canadian farmers paid \$131 million to move export grain under the Crow freight rate in the 1981-82 crop year. This grain, in turn, contributed some \$6.3 billion to the balance of trade and therefore to the benefit of the whole country.

The undersigned petitioners believe that this is the farmers' fair contribution to the Canadian economy and that western farmers are in fact willing to pay one times the Crow, or in essence no change. Wherefore the undersigned, your petitioners, humbly pray and call upon Parliament to maintain the present statutory rate, meaning the Crow rate, and as in duty